

## Proposed Plan Draws Over 4,800 Comments

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The public comment period on the Lower Fox River/Green Bay Proposed Cleanup Plan generated over 4,800 comments by the time it ended on January 22, 2002.

According to Ed Lynch, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Fox River remedial investigation/feasibility study manager, "The comments gave us a wide range of opinions and varied from very straightforward to technical and detailed."

Since the end of the comment period, DNR and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency staff and consultants have been sorting the comments, studying them and creating responses to them. Those responses will be contained in the responsiveness summary and used in formulating the final cleanup plan that will be detailed in the record of decision document. The responsiveness summary will be attached to the record of decision and both are expected to be released later this summer.

Comments were received by e-mail, personal letter, postcard, response forms clipped from newspapers and detailed reports reflecting on all or parts of the proposed plan. Because many of the comments were the same or very similar, they were sorted into master categories for responses. For example, a comment that was received numerous times expressed interest in lowering the action level or cleanup standard to .25 parts per million. A number



*DNR's Ed Lynch examines one of the binders full of comments.*

## Fish and Wildlife Service E-mail, Web Sites Return

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

After nearly four months, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Internet sites and e-mail service have been restored. Electronic services for most of the department, including the Fish and Wildlife Service, were shut down last December because of a court order. At press time, the department's agencies were fully electronically accessible, with only a few exceptions.

If you need to reach FWS staff concerning the Lower Fox River, please contact Colette Charbonneau at (920) 465-7407 or at [colette\\_charbonneau@fws.gov](mailto:colette_charbonneau@fws.gov). You may also refer to the FWS Web site at [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

---

*See Comments, page 5*

---

*In response to reader requests, the Fox River Current will regularly feature successful natural resource damage assessments similar to what may occur at the Lower Fox River.*

# Spotlight On:

## Montrose Settlements Restoration Program

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Along the coast of Southern California is an area known as the Southern California Bight and Channel Islands. A bight, a term unfamiliar to most people in the Midwest, is a body of water partly enclosed by land with a wide outlet to the sea. In this case, the bight roughly extends from Point Conception at the north to the California/Mexico border to the south. This area includes the popular seaside communities of Newport Beach, Long Beach and Santa Barbara. The Channel Islands are made up of eight picturesque islands including Santa Catalina, Santa Cruz and San Clemente. While vacationers enjoy the outdoor amenities, they may not realize that this scenic community is recovering from some serious environmental problems.

Between the late 1940s and early 1970s, the Montrose Chemical Company operated a plant in Torrance, Calif., that discharged about 1,800 tons of the pesticide DDT into Los Angeles County sewers that eventually emptied into the Pacific Ocean off the Palos Verdes Shelf. The company also dumped hundreds of tons of DDT-contaminated waste into the ocean near Santa Catalina Island. Other Los Angeles area industries also flushed massive amounts of

polychlorinated biphenyls through local sewerage systems and eventually into the ocean.

The PCBs substantially damaged the natural resources that lived in and around the bight's coastal waters. The damages included breeding failures in bald eagles, eggshell thinning in peregrine falcons and contamination in fish caught along the coast by commercial, recreational and subsistence fishermen. The fish contamination led to the state of California's issuance of health advisories for about 50 species of sport fish common to the Los Angeles area.



*A sign at Cabrillo pier, north of Long Beach, warns anglers not to eat coaker, a fish contaminated by DDT and PCBs. (Photo by J. Cubit, NOAA.)*

By December 2000, state and federal natural resource trustees settled four legal claims brought against a number of companies for releasing millions of pounds of PCBs and DDT into the bight. The claims, totaling \$140 million, will be used to fund two different types of activities, as required under the Superfund law:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control will use a share of the funds to reduce the exposure of people and wildlife to DDT and PCBs.
- The trustees will use about \$30 million to restore public resources harmed by releases of DDT and PCBs off the Southern California coast.

Restoration plans will be drafted for public comment. These plans describe the types of projects that may be used to benefit the injured natural resources, according to Superfund law. Two feasibility studies will assist the trustees in making recommendations about possible projects. Contaminant levels in sport and commercial fish will be surveyed allowing the trustees to plan projects creating better fishing environments and informing the public about fish and fishing locations with low levels of contamination. Trustees will also begin a five-year study this summer to evaluate the possibility of reintroducing bald eagles into the Northern Channel Islands, a project the community supports, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Natural Resource Damage Assessment Branch Chief Tom Suchanek.

He explained why the project will last five years. Suchanek said the eagles, which were reared at the San Francisco Zoo, will be released on Santa Cruz Island and their movements monitored. "We are hoping to release quite a number of young eagles," he stated. "We hope they will eventually pair up and raise their own young."

The eagles' food resources will also be monitored during this time, he added. Since eagles occasionally eat dead marine mammals, scientists will test these potential food sources to see how

much DDE (a breakdown product of DDT) the carcasses contain. This will allow the eagles to be evaluated to determine the effects of DDE.

See **Spotlight**, page 5



*Bald eagles like the two young chicks (all dark plumage) in this photo will be bred and released into the wild as part of the restoration program. (Photo by P. Sharpe, Institute for Wildlife Studies.)*

## Montrose Settlements Restoration Program Natural Resource Trustees

Natural resource trustees can be federal agencies with mandates to protect natural resources, state agencies that the governor believes have interests in a particular area, and Indian tribes with concerns about specific resources. For the Montrose restoration projects, the natural resource trustees are:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Park Service
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California State Lands Commission
- California Department of Parks and Recreation



# EPA Honors Fox River Staff

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Two U.S. Environmental Protection Agency staff members were recently honored as recipients of national awards for their work on the Lower Fox River project.

Jim Hahnenberg, remedial project manager, was presented with the 2002 Remedial Project Manager "Excellence in Community Involvement" award at the National Association of Remedial Project Managers conference in May in Orlando, Fla. Bri Bill, community involvement coordinator, traveled to Washington D.C. in April to receive the "Superfund Community Involvement Coordinator of the Year" award.

Nominated by his colleagues in EPA's Office of Public Affairs, Hahnenberg was one of three project managers selected nationwide for this year's award. Nominees were judged on specific criteria:

- developing a community involvement process that provided constructive participation in the cleanup process;
- supporting EPA community involvement coordinators;
- identifying the community's needs/concerns and sought ways to address them;
- demonstrating a personal commitment to early, ongoing community involvement;
- showing compassion and dedication when working with the community and state/local officials; and
- participating in community meetings, disseminated information and identified ways to involve the public.

According to the nomination write-up, "Jim is a walking public forum for constructive participation as he listens to good-natured criticism while considering both sides."

Hahnenberg has been working with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resource Trustees on the Fox River project since a site team was established in 1997. Today, he remains committed to a positive working relationship with citizens, elected officials, governmental partners and co-workers.

EPA's Superfund Division Director William E. Muno was pleased to learn that Hahnenberg was the recipient of this award. "Jim has made a strong personal commitment to



*Jim Hahnenberg discusses the Fox River project with Rebecca Katers, executive director of the Clean Water Action Council, before an October 2001 press conference which officially released the Lower Fox River Proposed Plan to the public.*

the cleanup of the Fox River," he added. "He has effectively articulated EPA's position in numerous public speaking engagements while at the same time remaining open to opposing views."

This is the second time in four years that a project manager from EPA's Chicago office has been recognized for exceptional community involvement efforts.

Bill, also nominated by her EPA Chicago colleagues, was judged on her:

- experience with complex coordination and negotiation;
- use of innovative technologies, techniques or processes;
- community involvement/outreach efforts; and
- exceptional team efforts.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate has also worked on the Fox River project since the site team's inception. An EPA employee for over 11 years, Bill was selected for this award over community involvement coordinators nominated from the other nine EPA regional offices.

### Spotlight from page 3

This project is currently a priority for the trustees who took public input seriously and have made sure that the community has had ample opportunities for involvement thus far. "The community appears to be very much behind this project," Suchanek continued.

FWS and the other trustees hope community participation and support will continue as they identify the best projects that will meet restoration goals. They plan to create a Web site, develop fact sheets and other educational materials, release documents for public comment, hold public meetings, conduct surveys, and provide information about fish and fishing locations with low levels of contamination.

For further information on the Montrose projects, contact Tom Suchanek at (916) 414-6590 or refer to the FWS Web site: [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) or the NOAA Web site: [www.darcnw.noaa.gov](http://www.darcnw.noaa.gov).

### Comments from page 1

of other comments expressed the opinion that any cleanup plan must protect the environmental and economic health of Northeast Wisconsin.

As soon as the responsiveness summary and record of decision are completed, the documents will be available to the public at the information repositories in Green Bay, Appleton, Sturgeon Bay, Oshkosh and Oneida. They will also be available on the DNR Lower Fox River Web page and through the EPA Region 5 Web site. Additionally, copies of the comments themselves and the summary will be available for viewing as part of the administrative record maintained at the DNR offices in Madison and Green Bay and the EPA Region 5 office in Chicago.



## Out and About...

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership, made up of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, regularly provides speakers to organizations in the Fox Valley area. The following partners recently made presentations:

May

- *Secretary Darrell Bazzell*, DNR: Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce, Appleton; Fox River remediation and restoration process.
- *Greg Hill*, DNR: Leadership Fox Cities Class of 2001-2002, Menasha; Fox River cleanup panel discussion.
- *Ed Lynch*, DNR: Wisconsin Association of Civil Engineers, Madison; Fox River cleanup proposed plan.



# Profile On . . . Todd Goeks

## NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinator Protects His Native Waters

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

After living and working “all over the country” for nearly 18 years, Todd Goeks, coastal resource coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration returned to the Midwest to ensure that injured natural resources close to his hometown are restored.

Goeks, 42, who grew up in Cedarburg, Wis., earned his bachelor’s degree in biology and geology-ecology from Ripon College in 1981. “I was looking at a career in watershed management in the timber industry, but was faced with a depressed job market,” he explained.

Since Goeks had always wanted to see Alaska, he decided to head there, where he ended up working for that state’s fish and game department. He was assigned to a summer research project to help develop big game hunting regulations.

When his summer project ended, Goeks embarked on a career in the oil industry, where he did subsurface geophysical surveys. He lived and worked throughout the “oil states” of the midwestern and eastern United States. When the oil industry started to deteriorate in the late 1980s, Goeks moved on. “I needed to find a more stable career,” he recalled.

In search of stability, Goeks moved to California to take a position with the state’s Department of Health in the Toxics Substances Control Division. “That was the start of my environmental career,” he said.

While beginning his new career, Goeks gained some valuable experience as a hazardous materials specialist, investigating potential Superfund sites. He also served as a project manager and on-scene coordinator directing environmental cleanups. He remembered working on the Bortz Oil site in California, which had “a criminal element,” according to Goeks. “One of the guys ended up with some jail time for criminal negligence,” he said.

“Nobody was cooperating at all,” he continued. “The company representative was an accountant. I had to put all of the descriptions of contamination and the consequences together in terms that made sense to an accountant—mainly dollars. We ended up with a cohesive partnership among the company, state and local agencies to develop a cleanup plan.”



*Todd Goeks*

In 1989, Goeks left California and made his way back closer to home when he accepted a position with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. There, he managed Superfund projects and worked on risk assessments until 1995 when he was “borrowed” by NOAA. Finally, in 1998, he became a NOAA employee. “So here I am a couple of decades later, doing watershed management, trying to reduce contaminant loading, and restoring natural resources,” he stated.

Today, Goeks, his wife and three children live in the Chicago area, but often visit family in Wisconsin. “We’ve been spread all over the United States, and this is the closest we’ve been to each other,” he continued. “I really like living and working in the Midwest. It has a very strong work ethic.”

A hard worker in his own right, Goeks is spread thin. As the lone NOAA trustee representative for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Chicago office, he is asked to provide input on a number of projects in its six-

*See Profile, page 7*

---

## Profile from page 6

---

state area. In addition to the Lower Fox River's natural resource damage assessment, Goeks has been involved in the Sheboygan River and Harbor, Moss-American in Milwaukee and, more recently, Cedar Creek in Cedarburg, all in Wisconsin. In addition, he has worked on Michigan's Kalamazoo and Manistique River Superfund sites.

He explained that as NOAA's trustee representative, he wears two hats. "With trustee authority, all aquatic resources in the Great Lakes basin are of interest to us," he said. "We also provide technical assistance to EPA and states on Superfund sites under a national agreement. In evaluating sites, we bring expertise in aquatic environments as well as in assessing cleanup technologies. One of our major goals is to address as much contamination as possible to be sure that aquatic resources are protected and that residual injuries are minimized."

As for protecting the Fox River's resources, Goeks, said he is faced with challenges unlike any other Superfund site. He explained that, from a national perspective, the volume of contaminated sediment that needs to be addressed is a daunting task. "A lot of people have expressed reservations about whether a site this size could be reasonably addressed," Goeks stated.

He apparently has no reservations as he speaks confidently about his work. "I'm pleased with the direction it is going," he said. "I believe we will end up with contamination addressed to a large degree. I'd like to see restoration that is commensurate with the resources injured. That would be a combination of restoration projects that will adequately compensate the public for past and residual contamination."

He is intrigued about the prospects of the new technology presented in the Minergy glass furnace project as a means to help clean up and restore the Fox River. "Anytime you can destroy a contaminant or reduce its toxicity, you're closer to achieving a permanent solution," he claimed. "This is one of the first technologies to come down the pike in a long time that could help address contaminated sediment throughout the Great Lakes."

Although Goeks claims to have little free time after work between family obligations and a home addition in progress, he tries to return to his roots whenever possible. He likes to take his family to his grandfather's cabin in Northern Wisconsin to snowshoe, hike and canoe. "My grandfather, who was originally from Merrill, built a log cabin there in 1938," he said. "It's just a cabin in the woods near a lake in the middle of Hiawatha State Forest."

## Check out these Web sites:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/lowerfox/>

<http://www.fws.gov/r9dec/nrdar/nrdamain.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/foxriver/>

<http://www.fws.gov/r3pao/nrda/>



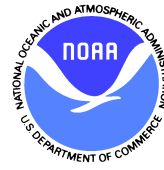
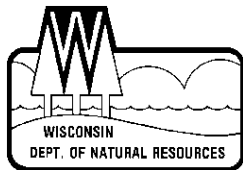
## Information Available at Local Libraries

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets and other documents related to the Lower Fox River cleanup at information repositories set up in the reference sections of the following local libraries. Information repositories at the public libraries in DePere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown have been discontinued. However, binders containing fact sheets will be mailed to and maintained at these locations as well as at the repositories listed below.

- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton, Wis.; (920) 832-6170
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, Wis.; (920) 448-4381, Ext. 394
- **Door County Library**, 107 S. Fourth Ave., Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; (920) 743-6578
- **Oneida Community Library**, 201 Elm St., Oneida, Wis.; (920) 869-2210
- **Oshkosh Public Library**, 106 Washington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.; (920) 236-5200



*An administrative record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the final site cleanup plan will be based, is also available for review at two DNR offices: 801 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wis. and 101 S. Webster St., 3rd Floor, Madison, Wis. An administrative record is also available at the EPA Record Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago, Ill.*



Prepared by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Supporting agencies include the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by all members of the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership.

## ***INSIDE*      *FOX RIVER CURRENT***

Proposed Plan Draws Over 4,800 Comments	1
Fish and Wildlife Service E-mail, Web Sites Return	1
Spotlight On: Montrose Settlements Restoration Program	2
EPA Honors Fox River Staff	4
Out and About...	5
Profile On...Todd Goeks	6
Information Repository Locations	7
Web Site Addresses	7

*Fox River Current* is published bimonthly by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership. Its purpose is to provide up-to-date information about cleanup and restoration efforts on the Lower Fox River. Call Greg Swanson at (608) 264-6024 to request a subscription or alternative format. Feedback on articles and ideas for future issues are welcome. Send comments to Greg Swanson, *Fox River Current*, DNR, CE/6, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707 or e-mail <swansg@dnr.state.wi.us>

Reproduced on Recycled Paper 